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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

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KOREA
COUNTRY OF CONFLICT

An Individual Study Project
Intended for Publication

by

Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence K. White, Jr.

James W. Williams, Ph.D.
Project Adviser

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United States Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
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INTRODUCTION

"KOREAN HISTORY IS A STORY OF SURVIVAL. IT IS THE ACCOUNT OF A PEOPLE CONSTANTLY BESET BY LARGER NATIONS BENT ON DOMINATION, YET ALWAYS MANAGING TO RETAIN THEIR OWN DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER AND CULTURE, AND ULTIMATELY THEIR INDEPENDENCE."¹

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This paper examines the history of conflict on the Korean Peninsula. It puts United States involvement in the context of Korean history rather than the more normal other way around. Conflict on the Korean Peninsula has been the dominant characteristic since history began in the region. This paper discusses conflict in Korea during the following periods: 3,000 B.C. to 1800 A.D.; 1800 to 1943, 1943 to 1950; 1950 to 1953; 1953 to 1978; and 1978 to 1990. Emphasis is placed on military conflict on the Korean Peninsula and the eventual United States involvement in it. The paper then assesses modern day South Korea and the potential for continued conflict. It concludes that the United States should continue to station troops in Korea to prevent conflict. It also makes recommendations for needed changes in U.S. policies in Korea.

¹History, Korea Background Series, Korean Overseas Information Service, Seoul Korea, 1972, p. 5.

3,000 B.C. TO 1800 A.D.

CHOSON

Korea was first settled in 3000 B.C. by Tungusic tribes from Mongolia who spoke an Ural-Altaic language and followed shamanic religion. Tangun, a legendary figure in Korean history, established the first Korean Kingdom of Choson in 2333 B.C. Choson was more of a confederation of tribes and clans than a true kingdom.²

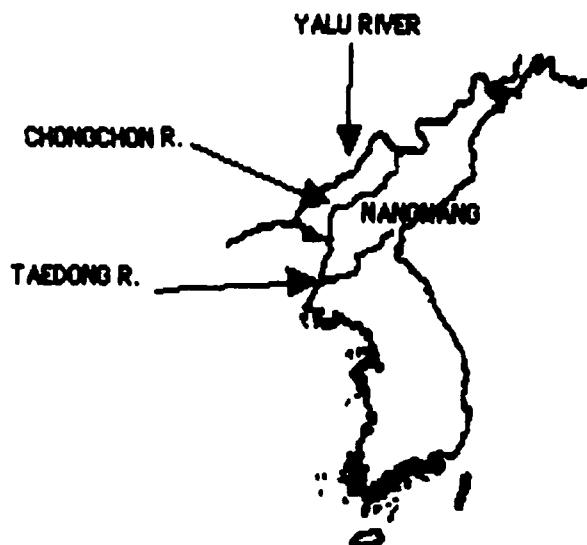


²"History of Korea," American Academic Encyclopedia, Compuserve, Mar 90.

CHINESE CONQUER CHOSON

From the beginning of its history, China has been the dominant factor in the development of Korea.

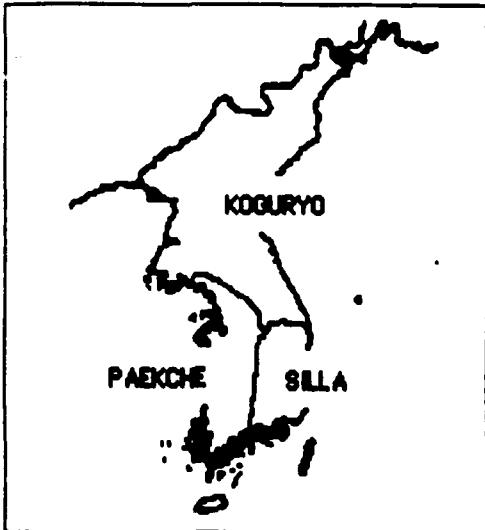
In 108 B.C., the Chinese Han Dynasty conquered Choson and set up four colonies in the northern part of the Korean peninsula.³ Nangnang, the northernmost, was between the Cheongcheon and the Taedong Rivers near what is now Pyongyang and lasted until 313 A.D.⁴



The Han were famous for building solid administrative structures, and they were a strong influence on the people of Choson. Local political institutions began to grow largely as a result of and partly in opposition to the Chinese incursion. Koreans patterned themselves after the Chinese, but asserted a Korean character. In this process, three Korean monarchial states, Silla (57 B.C.), Koguryo (37 B.C.), and Paekche (18 B.C.) emerged on the peninsula during the first century B.C.

³Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 7.

⁴Ibid.



CHINESE ATTACK KOGURYO

The demise of the Han Dynasty in China during the first century B.C. allowed these three kingdoms to flourish until 589 AD when the Sui Dynasty came to power in China.⁵ The Sui sent several armies to Korea in the period 598 to 618 to conquer the Koguryo and reassert Chinese influence over the Korean peninsula. The Koguryo, however, were successful in defending themselves, and in time, the Sui Dynasty stopped sending forces to invade Koguryo.⁶

The Tang Dynasty followed the Sui in China. They, like the Sui before them, sent troops to dominate the Korean Peninsula, but the Koguryo successfully defended themselves in the area that is now North Korea. Unable to defeat the Koguryo, the Tang dynasty made an agreement with the Silla Kingdom in the south. Together they subjugated Koguryo and Paekche in 660.⁷ Silla then betrayed the alliance by supporting local uprisings in Paekche and Koguryo. The Chinese eventually relented and recognized Silla's sovereignty on the Korean Peninsula south of the Taedong River.⁸

⁵Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 13.

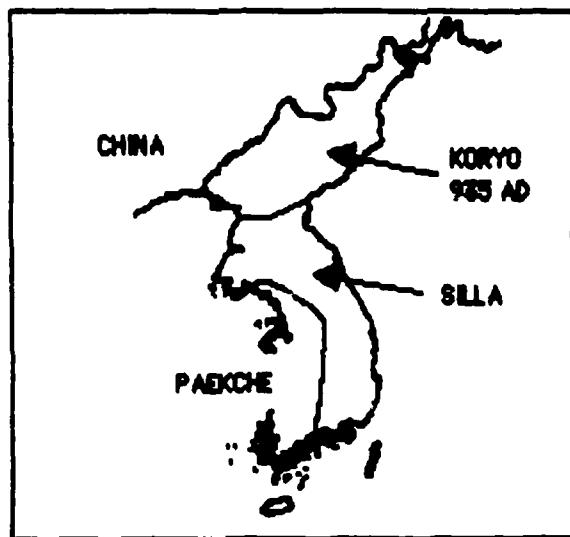
⁶Ibid., p. 14.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., p. 16.

KORYO

In 935 the Koryo kingdom replaced the Silla kingdom as the dominant power on the Korean Peninsula. The Koryo Kingdom moved the capitol to Gaesong just west of modern day Panmujon.⁹



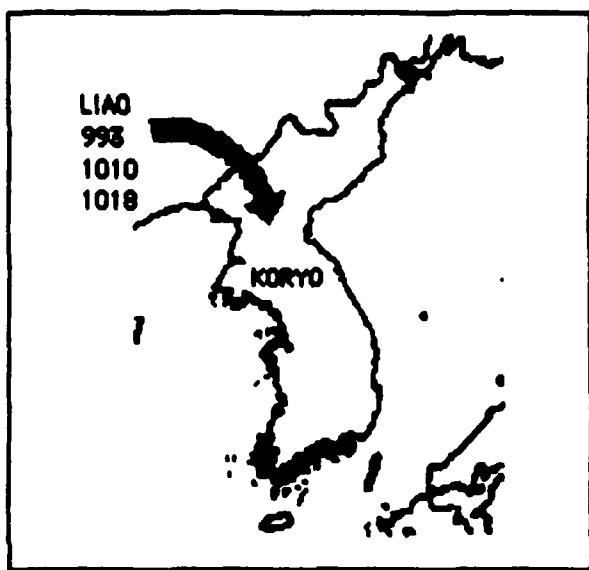
The Chinese left the Korean Peninsula alone until the late 900s. In uniting China in 979 the Sung Dynasty had continuing difficulty with the Liao tribes inhabiting much of southwestern Manchuria. In 985 the Sung Emperor requested an alliance with the Koryo against the Liao. Fearing the more direct threat of the Liao on their northern border, the Koryo refused.¹⁰

⁹Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 22.

¹⁰ibid., p. 26.

LIAO FIGHT KORYO

The Liao invaded Koryo in 993 to secure their southern flank. They were, however, unsuccessful and withdrew.

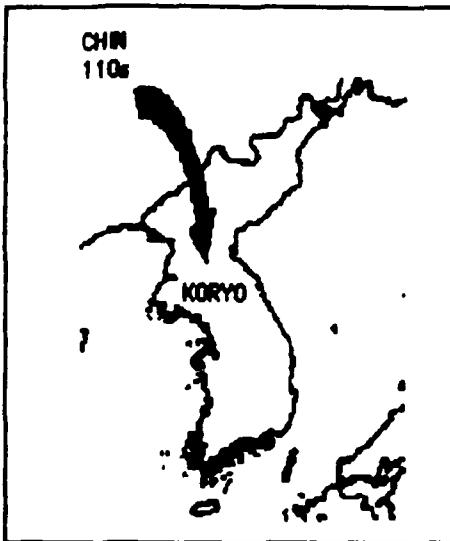


They invaded again in 1010 and 1018, but were unsuccessful each time and concluded that the Koryo were unconquerable.¹¹

¹¹Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 29.

CHIN FIGHT KORYO

The Chin, a group of Manchurian tribes, replaced the Liao as the northern threat to both China and



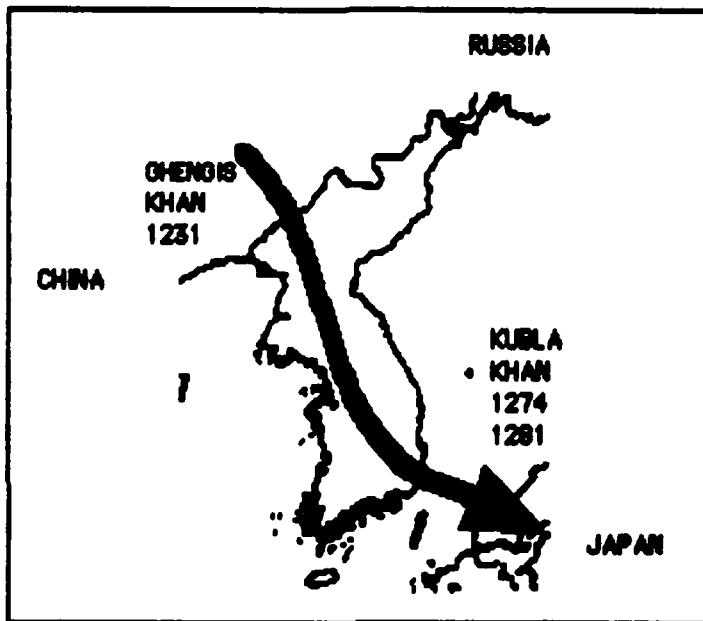
Koryo. Like the Liao, they attacked Koryo early in the 12th Century to secure their southern flank while addressing China directly. They had only minor success against the Koryo.¹² In an alliance of convenience, The Sung Dynasty in China combined with the Chin to do away with the Liao once and for all, which they did. However, the Chin then turned around and forced the Chinese to recognize their domination of northern China. Koryo wisely remained neutral.¹³ The Chin, apparently satisfied with their accomplishments and previously impressed by the Koryos, did not invade the Korean Peninsula again.

¹²Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 29.

¹³Ibid., p. 30.

MONGOLS INVADE KOREA

The next incursion came from Mongolia. In 1231, Genghis Khan and his hordes invaded Korea as an extension of their conquest of China.¹⁴ They occupied Korea and used the Peninsula as a base for invasions against Japan in 1274 and 1281. Both attacks were unsuccessful and so weakened Mongol rule that the Koryo Kingdom was able to reassert itself by 1351.¹⁵



YI DYNASTY

In 1388 Koryo decided to invade China in retaliation for past grievances. General Yi, the Koryo officer selected to lead the effort, however, turned his troops around and seized power in Koryo. The Yi Dynasty which he founded replaced the Koryo Dynasty and lasted until 1592. General Yi moved the capital from Gaesong to Hanyang, the present city of Seoul. He also gave the new nation the name, Choson, which came from the Chinese "Chao-hsien" and means "morning freshness" or "morning calm."¹⁶

¹⁴Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 32.

¹⁵Ibid., p.34-35.

The Yi Dynasty established control over the entire Peninsula and is the first instance of what we know as Korea being firmly united under one rule.

JAPAN INVADES KOREA

With the Japanese incursions beginning in the 1500s, a new character to conflict on the Peninsula emerged. Prior to this time, invading armies had always come from the north and had eventually been forced to withdraw back to the north. Now conflict would become more of a contest between larger nations intent upon fighting one another in Korea. The nature of this type conflict characterizes the rest of Korean history and is still an accurate description of conflict in Korea.

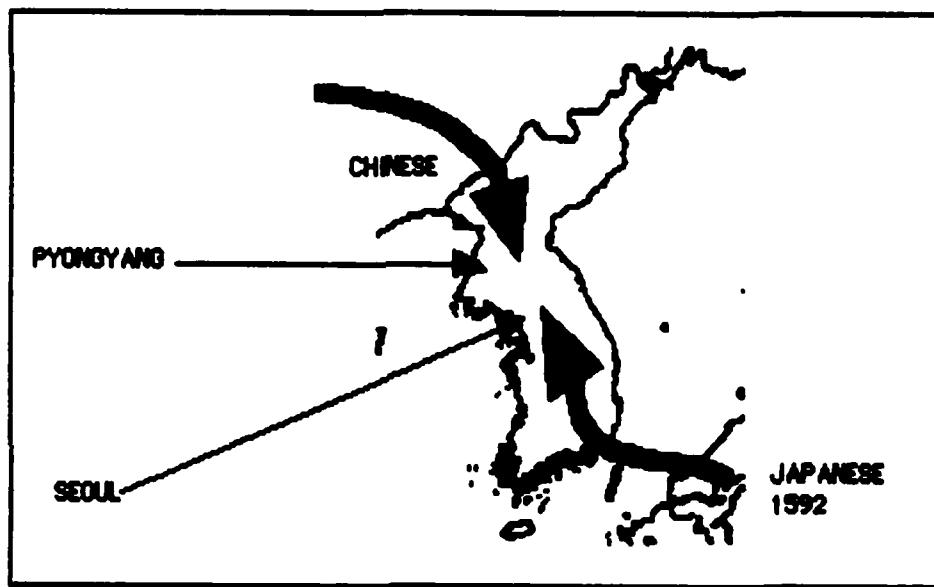
In 1592, a Japanese army enroute to attack China landed on the Korean Peninsula at Pusan and headed north.¹⁷ The Korean Navy harassed the Japanese at Sea in the famous use of Turtle Boats, a precursor to the use of ironclads in the American Civil War. As a result of these naval engagements, local Korean resistance, and long lines of supply, the Japanese had increasing difficulty the further north they advanced.

¹⁶Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 41.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 56.

CHINA INVADES KOREA

China sent troops to Korea to confront the Japanese near Pyongyang. Initially, the Chinese were able to push the Japanese back to Seoul.¹⁸ The Japanese then rallied and pushed the Chinese back north.¹⁹ A difficult stalemate ensued during which negotiations dragged on for several years in the first instance of a phenomenon still characteristic of competing forces on the peninsula.²⁰



In 1597, the Japanese renewed the invasion from Japan, but quickly withdrew without success.²¹ Despite the devastation caused by Japanese incursions, Korea reestablished peaceful relations with Japan in 1606 and had no further difficulty with Japan until the 1800s.²²

¹⁸Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 57.

¹⁹Ibid.

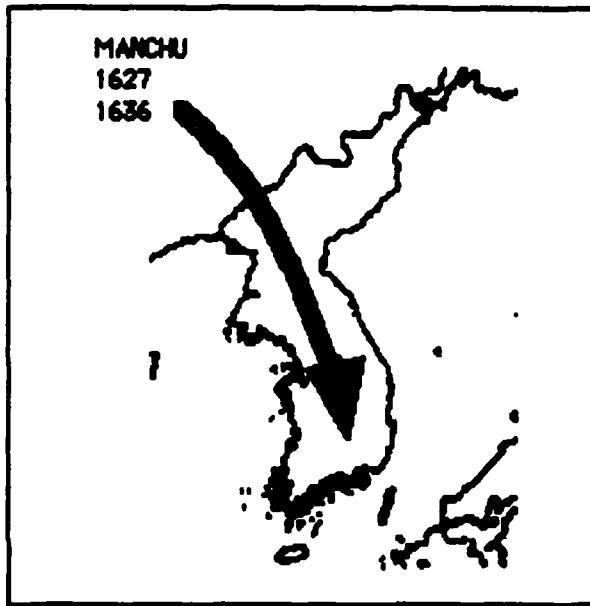
²⁰Ibid., p. 58.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., p. 59.

MANCHU INVADE KOREA

The next incursion came, as of old, from the north, this time from Manchuria. A confederation of Manchu tribes along the northern border of Korea, began to expand their influence at the expense of China.



In 1627 the Manchu crossed the Yalu to secure their southern flank while making their main effort against the Chinese, just as the Chin had done in the 12th Century.²³ The Manchus overran most of the peninsula, but formalized a peace treaty and quickly withdrew.

The Manchus attacked again in 1636, this time thoroughly subjugating Korea. In time they went on to conquer all of China and to normalize their relations with Korea. They continued to dominate Korean political, economic, and social institutions. Koreans, in their deep resentment, increased their sense of nationalism although it continued to be a nationalism suppressed by a foreign power.²⁴

²³Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 60.

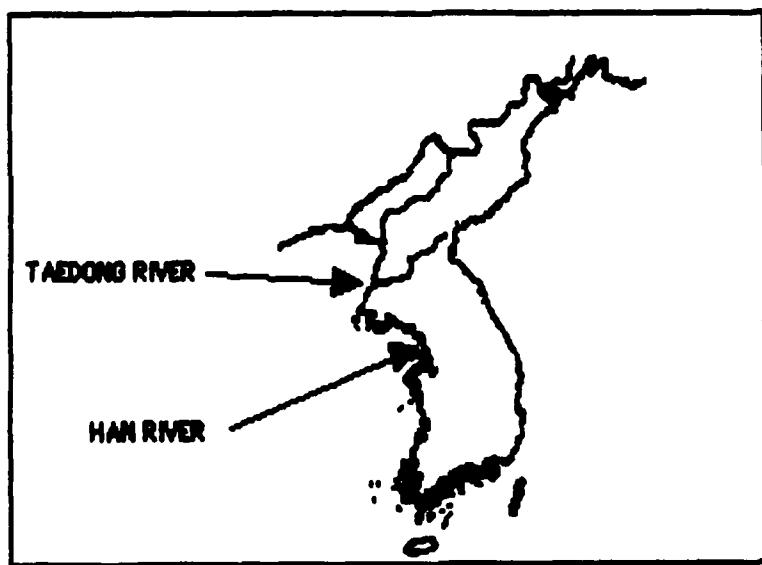
²⁴ibid.

1800 - 1945

Asia slowly allowed Western influence to expand with China opening some ports in the late 1700s and Japan receiving Admiral Perry in 1854.

UNITED STATES ATTACKS KOREA

In an effort to expand trade, the U.S. merchantman *General Sherman* sailed up the Taedong River in 1866. Korean shore batteries sank the vessel, and no one aboard survived. U.S. Navy ships *Wachusett* and *Shenandoah* searched for remains of the *General Sherman* in 1867 and 1868 respectively, but had no success.



In 1871, because of the *General Sherman*, a U.S. Navy amphibious force attacked several forts dominating the approaches to the Han River near what is now Inchon. The Americans destroyed the forts and departed Korea satisfied with the success of their punitive expedition. Koreans also considered the action a success since the attackers left and didn't come back.²⁵

²⁵James P. Finley, The United States Military Experience in Korea, 1871 - 1962, Command Historian's Office, Secretary of the Joint Staff, Hqs, USFK/EUSA, 1983, p. 37.

JAPAN PRESSURES KOREA

In 1876, the Japanese brought diplomatic and military pressure to bear on Korea and forced her to sign a Treaty of Amity. The treaty was a model of the one Western powers had forced on China and Japan.²⁶ It provided for the exchange of diplomatic missions and required opening Pusan and two other ports. The treaty also gave Japanese nationals in Korea the right of extra-territoriality, a provision Japan found particularly irksome in her own treaties with the West.²⁷ In an attempt to isolate Korea, Japan also insisted on considering Korea as a separate, free, and sovereign power, distinct from any historical relationship with China. Japanese merchants and goods followed. The Japanese exploited the Korean economy which suffered as a result.²⁸

UNITED STATES TREATY WITH KOREA

Between 1880 and 1882, with the help of China, the United States negotiated a treaty with Korea that was similar to Japan's. Great Britain, Russia, France, and Italy soon negotiated similar treaties. However, except for Russia, who was interested in securing the trade route through the Korean Straits to Vladivostock, none made significant efforts to exercise their influence.²⁹

JAPAN AND CHINA INVADE KOREA

To counteract Japanese influence, Koreans sent military officers to study tactics in China. The Japanese, however, set up a training program for Korean officers in Seoul. In 1882, the Chinese trained Korean officers staged a coup to replace the ruling Korean family and do away with Japanese influence. In so doing they attacked the Japanese run Korean officer training establishment in Seoul.

²⁶Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 77.

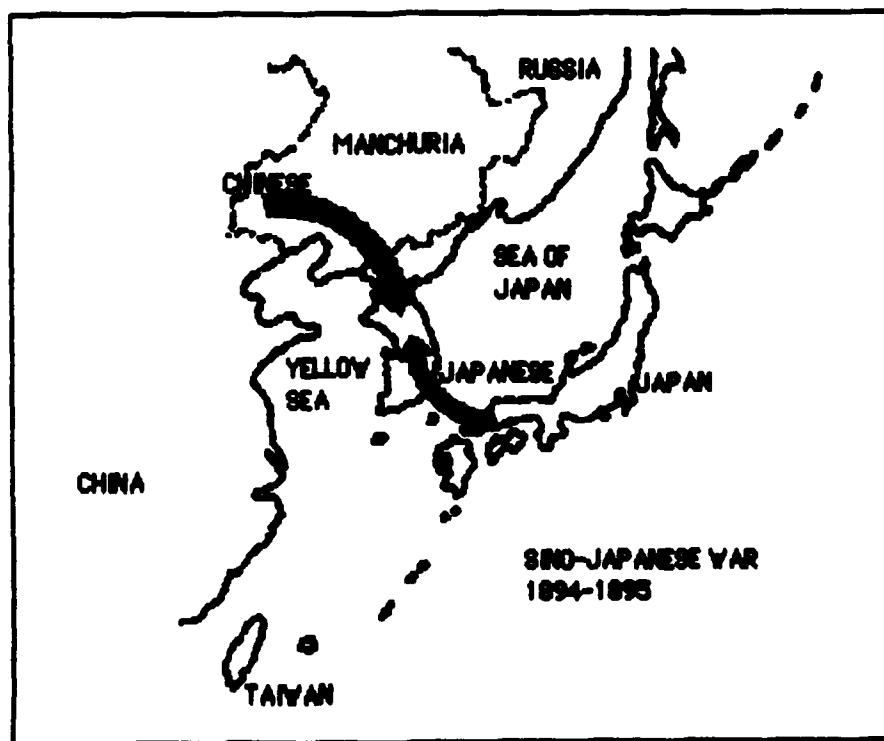
²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Youngnok Koo and Dae-Sook Suh, Korea and the United States. A Century of Cooperation, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1984, p. 4-6.

and installed a new ruler. The Japanese responded with an ultimatum requiring compensation for damages. The Chinese trained Koreans refused. Chinese troops then deployed to Korea and forced the Japanese to retire. Ironically, the invading Chinese reinstated the ruling family that had been in power before the original coup. China won this minor conflict, but Koreans were squarely in the middle between China and Japan.³⁰

In 1884, Korean officers, this time trained and supported by the Japanese, temporarily unseated the ruling family in another coup. Chinese troops in Seoul attacked to restore the status quo. They restored the ruling family and drove Japanese troops and diplomats out of the Korean capital. In the negotiations that followed, both Japan and China agreed to withdraw all of their troops from the Korean Peninsula and to not send any back without notifying one another.³¹



In 1894 an uprising of Korean farmers caused trouble for the Korean ruling family who asked the

³⁰Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 79.

³¹Ibid., p. 83.

Chinese for help. The Chinese responded by sending troops back to Korea; the Japanese responded to the Chinese by returning their own troops to Korea as well.³²

War between Japan and China began on 25 July 1894 when the Japanese simultaneously attacked Chinese infantry in Korea and the Chinese fleet in the Yellow Sea. Achieving complete surprise, Japan defeated the Chinese fleet and quickly pushed Chinese troops north to Pyongyang.³³ In the eventual Treaty of 1895 ending the Sino-Japanese War, Japan gained the Liaotung Peninsula, Taiwan, and a free hand in Korea.³⁴

JAPAN INCREASES CONTROL OF KOREA

In October 1895, Japanese soldiers in Korea attacked the Korean Royal Palace and killed the Korean queen. The Korean king escaped, but had to flee for his life. The Japanese government denied any involvement in the incident, and when the perpetrators were brought to trial, the charges were dismissed for lack of evidence.³⁵

In February 1905, the Russians intervened on behalf of the Koreans. The Russian Minister to Korea secretly reinforced his legation with 120 men from a Russian ship anchored at Inchon. He then escorted the Korean king and his son into the Russian legation where the king continued to rule for the next several years.³⁶ These years under Russian protection were the last years of relative freedom for Koreans.

Russia and Japan Attack China

In 1900, the Boxer Rebellion started in China. It was a Chinese popular uprising against

³²Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 83.

³³Ibid., p. 84.

³⁴Ibid., p. 85.

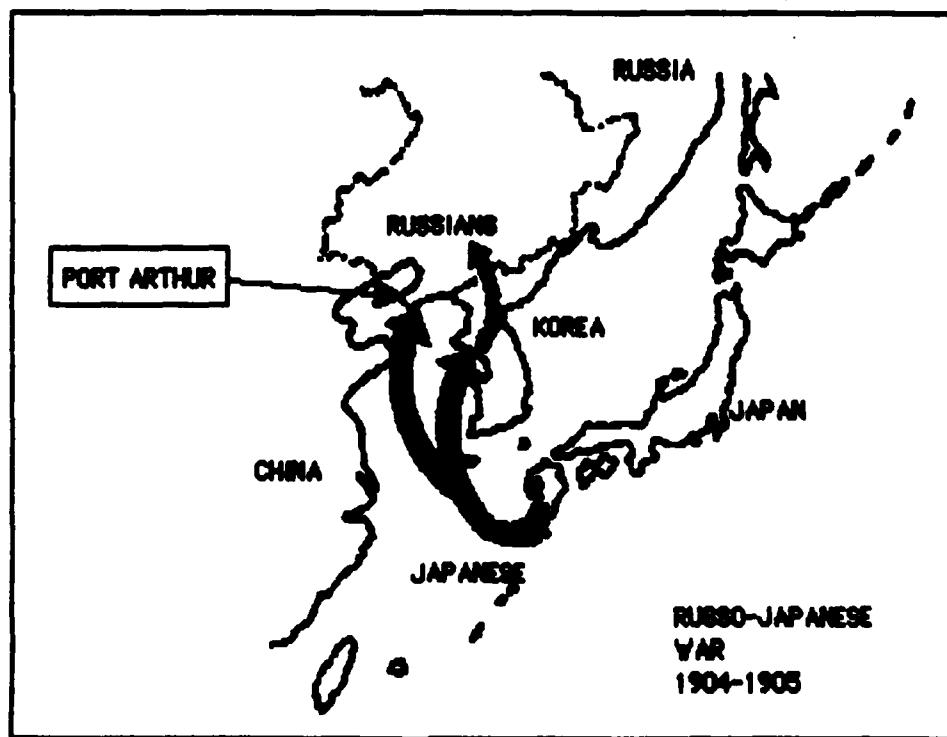
³⁵Ibid., p. 87.

³⁶Ibid., p. 89.

foreigners covertly supported by the Chinese ruling family. An international force was organized to suppress the rebellion and rescue foreign diplomats besieged in China. Russia and Japan among others sent troops. Japan sent the largest contingent and left them in China after the war³⁷. Russia also took advantage of this opportunity and after the war left troops in Manchuria.³⁸ Japan confronted Russia over Russia's continued presence in Manchuria and Russia's continuing influence in Korea. Russia was willing to talk about Korea, but would not budge on Manchuria. Further conflict with Korea again in the middle became inevitable.

JAPAN INVADES KOREA

On 8 February 1904, the Japanese attacked the Russian fleet at Port Arthur. Korea declared its neutrality, but Japanese troops landed at Inchon, marched east to Seoul and then north towards



Manchuria to attack the Russians.³⁹

³⁷Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 90-91.

³⁸DAPAM 550-41, South Korea, A Country Study, 1982, p. 12.

The Japanese defeated the Russians. The United States helped to negotiate the Treaty of Portsmouth which ended this war in 1905. Russia acquiesced to Japanese interests in Manchuria and in Korea, and Americans gave Japan a free hand. In a separately concluded and secret agreement between U.S. Secretary of War Taft and Japanese Prime Minister Katusa, the United States agreed to recognize Japanese hegemony in Korea if the Japanese would promise not to interfere with the United States in the Philippines.⁴⁰

In early November 1905, the Japanese coerced the Korean king to sign a treaty making Korea a Japanese protectorate,⁴¹ and on 28 November at Japan's request, the U.S. legation in Seoul closed. On 22 August 1910 Japan formally annexed Korea. Japanese domination remained absolute until 1945 and the end of World War II.

KOREAN INDEPENDENCE

Despite repressive Japanese rule, Koreans, at least ideologically, refused to give in. On 1 March 1919 leaders of various Korean groups submitted a Declaration of Independence to the Japanese and demonstrated peacefully for the right of Korea to be free and independent. Japanese in Korea reacted violently and arrested thousands. Many died as the result of severe treatment in prison, and the March First Movement, as it was called, failed to gain any measure of relief.⁴² It did serve as a future rally point for Korean independence.⁴³

³⁹DAPAM 550-41, p. 12.

⁴⁰Korean Overseas Information Service, p. 91.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Finley, p. 42.

⁴³Ibid.

JAPAN ATTACKS CHINA

Japanese domination intensified after 1937 when Japan began military operations against China in Manchuria. Korea represented a secure base of operations, raw material and a labor pool. Japan deported many Koreans to Japan where they worked as virtual slaves. The Japanese also exported Korean rice and raw materials to Japan. In the process, Japan brutalized Korea with oppressive policies such as forbidding the use of the Korean language in schools and repressing the practice of Korea religion and cultural activities. This state of affairs lasted until the Japanese surrender at the end of World War II in 1945.

1943 - 1950

NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA

On 26 November 1943, the United States, China and Great Britain signed the Cairo Declaration in an effort to organize the world after WW II. The Declaration included an agreement that Korea should become independent once the war with Japan had been won.⁴⁴ Russia subsequently agreed to this concept on 8 August 1945 when she declared war on Japan.

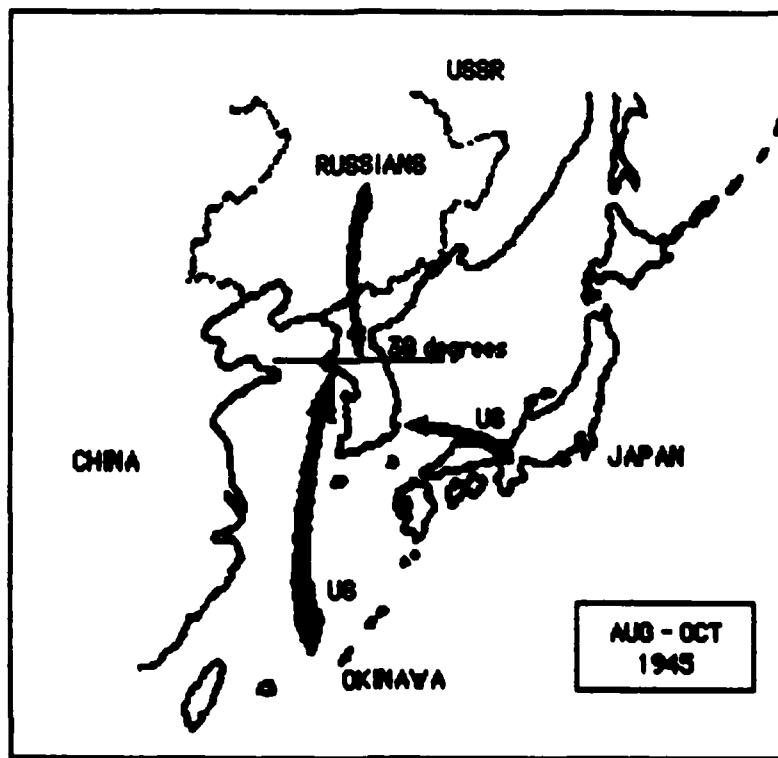
On 11 August, in anticipation of imminent Japanese surrender, U.S. Army Colonels Bonesteel and Rusk worked on a plan which selected the 38th parallel as an administrative line dividing Korea into two zones of occupation. Colonel Rusk would later become the Secretary of State and Colonel Bonesteel would gain four star rank and become the Commander in Chief of The United Nations Command (CINC UNC) in Korea from 1966 to 1969. The two zones of occupation were to facilitate surrender of the Japanese and subsequent return of Korea to Koreans. Russians were to occupy the northern half of the peninsula; Americans the southern. Rusk and Bonesteel would have preferred for the United States to accept surrender of all Japanese in Korea, but with Russians in full control of Manchuria by 9 August, they did not think that they could get away with any line drawn further north than the 38th parallel.⁴⁵ Somewhat to their surprise, the Soviets accepted this plan which was formally approved by President Roosevelt on 15 August 1945.

The Soviets proceeded south from Manchuria without delay and had occupied all Korean territory north of the 38th parallel by 26 August 1945.

⁴⁴DA PAM 550-41, p. 18.

UNITED STATES OCCUPIES SOUTH KOREA

On 29 August 1945, the U.S. XXIV Corps in Okinawa received the mission to occupy Korea south of the 38th parallel. On 2 September 1945, the Japanese formally surrendered to General MacArthur on the Battleship Missouri in Tokyo. On 4 September the XXIV Corps advance party arrived by air in Seoul; prisoner of war recovery teams followed on 6 September. The 7th Infantry Division arrived by sea at Inchon on 8 September, and the Japanese formally surrendered south of the 38th parallel in a ceremony in Seoul on 9 September 1945.



The XXIV Corps mission in Korea was to transition Korea south of the 38th parallel from Japanese rule to an American military government and thereafter to a Korean government that would govern the entire Korean Peninsula. In pursuing this aim, MG Arnold, Commanding General, 7th Infantry Division, became the Military Governor of South Korea on 12 September 1945. The 40th Infantry

Division arrived by boat on 22 September, and the 6th Infantry Division arrived from 10 to 31 October 1945. This completed the deployment of occupation troops and brought the total to 77,600.⁴⁵ Surrender and repatriation of Japanese and Koreans proceeded smoothly.

DIPLOMACY FAILS

An international commission met in Moscow beginning in December 1945 to determine how Korea would transition to a post war system of government. This effort did not go as well as the occupation and repatriation, and failing to reach consensus, the effort was abandoned in May of 1946.

President Truman called on the Soviet Union for a return to the spirit in which the Moscow Convention had been established, but made no progress. Seeking another path towards a solution, the United Nations created a Temporary Commission on Korea in November of 1947 which again called for a return to the principles of agreement of the Moscow Convention. The United Nations called for free elections on the Korean Peninsula and an end to foreign occupation as soon as possible. Shortly after the Temporary Commission's first meeting in Seoul on 12 January 1948, however, the commander of the Soviet zone of occupation refused to let its members north of the 38th parallel.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA ESTABLISHED

South Korea held free elections on 10 May 1948. two hundred elected representatives constituting the new National Assembly adopted a Constitution on 12 July and elected Syngman Rhee President on 15 July 1948. On 15 August 1948, the government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) was formally inaugurated and the authority of the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) was terminated.

⁴⁵DAPAM 550-41, p. 18..

THE FIRST UNITED STATES WITHDRAWAL

The United States was already in the process of rapidly withdrawing its forces rapidly. The 40th Infantry Division had departed in March 1946, and by 12 December 1948, only 16,000 American soldiers were left in Korea. By June 1949, all U.S. occupation forces were gone leaving only the U.S. Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea (KMAC). The United States was committed to helping South Korea by providing assistance, but it did not feel that U.S. troop units were required in Korea.

NSC-68

The decision to not station troops in Korea was consistent with the United States approach worldwide. In the period immediately following World War II, the United States had quickly reduced its military presence everywhere. At the end of the war, America had 12 million in uniform. By December of 1948, this number had shrunk to 1.5 million.⁴⁶ President Truman wanted to quickly reduce the \$250 billion national debt incurred as a result of the war. Reducing the size of the United States Armed Forces was his principal strategem for doing so. In the post World War II setting, the military would have to take a back seat to other measures. Foreign aid, nearly \$10 billion and mostly in Europe as the Marshall Plan, replaced military power as the principal instrument of United States' national security policy.⁴⁷

In this time of rapidly changing world events, the United States struggled with its foreign policy and strategies to execute them. As the Soviet Union refused to allow self-determination in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, Truman became confrontive. The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan resulted even as military budgets and military strength continued to decline. In 1948 Moscow overthrew the Czechoslovakian government and blockaded the Western Sectors of Allied occupied

⁴⁶Clay Blair, The Forgotten War, America in Korea 1950 - 1953, New York, Doubleday, 1987, p. 7.

⁴⁷Ibid.

Berlin. The Berlin Airlift (1948-49) defeated Soviet efforts to consolidate control of Berlin, and State Department planners continued to wrestle with a national strategy to accommodate not only the Soviet threat, but the newly established (1949) Chinese Communist regime well.

Convinced that a different world had indeed arrived, Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Paul Nitze, Chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, drafted National Security Memorandum 68 (NSC-68). It argued that America should commence a dramatic rearmament program to meet the new threats posed by China, the Soviet Union and world communism.⁴⁸ The State Department formally briefed this paper to the National Security Council on 25 April 1950, and, as Acheson said, "it became policy."⁴⁹ It was a prophetic document, but in 1950 the United States did not understand the policy's implications. More importantly, the United States no longer had the military capability to execute NSC-68.

UNITED STATES INTERESTS IN KOREA - 1950

In defining containment as described by NSC-68, a number of public conversations and public statements sought to delineate the perimeter beyond which the United States and the Free World would contain communism. United States interests were naturally focused on Europe; the Pacific was at best a secondary concern.

The Republic of Korea was not one of those areas perceived as important to the United States. On 5 January, President Truman announced a hands-off policy towards China.⁵⁰ A week later while explaining the President's remarks, Dean Acheson elaborated by describing the American strategic defensive perimeter in the Far East. Notably, he omitted South Korea.⁵¹ The implication was that the

⁴⁸Koo and Suh, p. 134.

⁴⁹Blair, p. 26.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 54.

⁵¹Ibid.

United States was quietly acknowledging that Korea was not in the United States' sphere of influence. This was explicitly what was done in 1905 at the end of the Russo-Japanese War. One week after Acheson's remarks, Congress voted down a \$10 million supplemental economic aid bill for South Korea.⁵² Subsequently reintroduced and passed, Congress was confused itself and in the process confused others by its actions. Senator Connally, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, further complicated the situation. The press asked him if he thought Korea was an "essential" part of America's defensive strategy. He replied, "No ... I don't think it is very greatly important."⁵³ Even the Pentagon eschewed the significance of Korea when it shelved for further study a \$10 million supplementary military aid bill⁵⁴ and directed a gradual reduction in the Korean Military Advisory Group (K MAG) from 500 to 250 by the end of 1950.⁵⁵ Finally, the Army had passed over Brigadier General Roberts, Chief of K MAG for promotion to major general. He was 59 years old and faced mandatory retirement in July of 1950, and the Army had not named a replacement.⁵⁶ At best, U.S. policy towards South Korea was a conundrum.

In a strict sense, the United States had no significant national security interests in or around the Korean Peninsula in 1950. The United States had never been a significant player on the Korean Peninsula and had no historical interest in Korea. America was the dominant naval power in the world and possessed adequate bases in Alaska, Hawaii, Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines from which to project power. Ideologically, Americans were sympathetic to the Korean desire for independence, but the United States had no significant diplomatic or economic interests in Korea. Indeed, other than the

⁵²Blair, p. 54.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 50.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 51.

United States experience of the 1860s and the brief military occupation from 1945 to 1949, the United States had nothing in common with Koreans. The United States' most forward interests were in Japan where occupation troops maintained law and order and assisted in recovery from the devastation of World War II.

1950 - 1953

THE KOREAN WAR

NORTH KOREA INVADES SOUTH KOREA

Despite a lack of United States national security interest in Korea, when North Korea attacked the Republic of Korea on 25 June 1950, President Truman decided to commit United States military forces in the Republic of Korea's defense.

It is unclear exactly what the President's thought process was, but it is fair to say that he was motivated by a sense of moral obligation to defend a newly established democracy as well as by a desire to stem the tide of communism. This is exactly how NSC-68 had defined the United States national interest, but it hadn't included Korea. In accordance with the President's decision, on 25 June, as the result of United States initiative, the United Nations (U.N.) authorized the United States and other U.N. forces to "Furnish assistance to the Republic of Korea and to repel the North Korean attack and restore international peace and security in the area."⁵⁷

The President thereafter incrementally expanded United States involvement in the war. On 26 June, he authorized General MacArthur, The Commander in Chief Far East (CINCFE), to provide air cover to ROK forces fighting North Koreans south of the 38th parallel.⁵⁸ On 29 June, the President further authorized air attack of targets north of the 38th parallel, deployment of Army logistic and signal support troops to the Republic of Korea, and employment of United States Army combat troops for security of the port and airfield at Pusan.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Blair, p. 73

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 75.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

On 30 June, the President authorized General MacArthur to commit United Nations and United States ground forces to the defense of Korea. On 1 July Task Force Smith, named for its commander and consisting of portions of the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, 24th Infantry Division and stationed in Japan, landed at Pusan. The Task Force moved north and engaged the invading North Koreans near Osan, 30 miles south of Seoul. Task Force Smith was poorly trained, understrength and had been committed piecemeal in a stop gap effort to do something to slow the North Korean attack. They did poorly and were forced to retreat having had no effect on the enemy. Despite the U.N. trappings, America was at war with North Korea.

America continued to commit untrained and unprepared troops as quickly as possible to defend South Korea. North Korean forces, however, continued their advance deep into South Korea. Americans and ROK forces were able to hold a perimeter around Pusan by mid-September 1950 despite American casualties of 18,165 (4,599 killed or mortally wounded, 12,377 wounded, the rest missing) and appreciably higher ROK losses.⁶⁰

On 15 September, amphibious forces of X (U.S.) Corps overpowered North Korean defenders at Inchon in a daring amphibious operation. On 19 September, Eighth United States Army (EUSA) began the pursuit and exploitation of the North Korean Peoples Army (NKPA) which had been compelled to withdraw from the Pusan Perimeter because the X Corps attack at Inchon had made their positions further south untenable. EUSA linked up with X Corps on 27 September and by the 29th Seoul was secure. The cost had been significant. X Corps suffered 3,151 casualties at Inchon including 536 dead.⁶¹ EUSA suffered 10,000 additional casualties in the pursuit from Pusan. Total American casualties stood at approximately 27,500 (6,000 dead, 19,000 wounded, and 2,500 captured or

⁶⁰Blair, p 270.

⁶¹Ibid. p.319

missing).⁶²

General MacArthur's intent had been to capture and destroy the NKPA caught between the anvil of X Corps at Inchon-Seoul and the hammer of EUSA striking north from Pusan. For a number of reasons, the NKPA were able to infiltrate north through ROK and U.S. lines, and General MacArthur failed to achieve the decisive victory he sought.

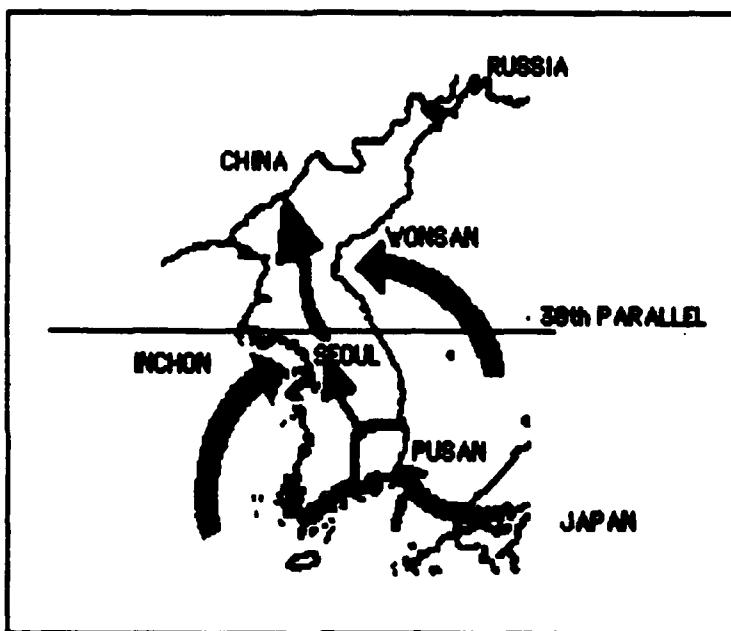
General MacArthur next planned another amphibious assault by X Corps at Wonsan on the east coast of the Peninsula. The X Corps would attack from its beachhead towards Pyongyang thereby cutting off the NKPA as the CINCFE had intended to do at Inchon. EUSA would then continue the attack north, capturing or destroying the NKPA caught between.

Logistical difficulties delayed X Corps. Inchon was used as the X Corps port of embarkation as well as the sea port of debarkation for EUSA's resupply. Confusion resulted in slowing X Corps' departure. Weather further delayed X Corps enroute to Wonsan. In the process of waiting for X Corps to get in place for its attack, the EUSA and ROK Army lost contact with the NKPA which continued to withdraw north.

⁶²Blair, p 319.

SOUTH KOREA INVADES NORTH KOREA

Almost before anyone knew it, in an attempt to regain contact with the enemy, ROK forces crossed the 38th parallel on 10 September 1950. Until this point, the U.N. mission had been to repel the North Korean attack and restore international peace and security in the area. In crossing the 38th parallel, the mission became, at least implicitly, the liberation of North Korea and reunification of the Korean Peninsula.



Chinese Premier Chou En Lai immediately made a public announcement in which he stated that the Chinese people "absolutely will not tolerate foreign aggression [in Korea] nor will they supinely tolerate seeing their neighbors being savagely invaded by imperialists."⁶³ He summoned the Indian ambassador to China and told him that if other than ROK forces crossed the 38th parallel, China would send troops into North Korea to oppose them.⁶⁴ No one paid attention.

⁶³Blair, p319.

⁶⁴Ibid. p. 319.

THE UNITED STATES INVADES NORTH KOREA

Without deliberate thought or an accurate assessment of the situation or the possible consequences, the United States and additional ROK forces decided to cross the 38th parallel in a movement to re-establish contact with the NKPA. The U.N. General Assembly approved a general advance into North Korea on 6 October. U.S. forces crossed the parallel on 9 October 1950. Pyongyang fell 19-20 October, and by 26 October the ROK 6th Division had advanced all the way north to the Yalu River, the border between North Korea and China. Belatedly the X Corps landed at Wonsan on 26 October and further to the north at Iwon on 29 October. Any chance of an envelopment had been totally frustrated by the delays. X Corps turned north and advanced toward the Yalu.

CHINA INVADES KOREA

True to Chou En Lai's word, Chinese Communist Forces (CCF), infiltrated across the Yalu earlier, attacked ROK Divisions in North Korea 25-30 October and the American 8th Regiment on 1 November. U.S., ROK, and other U.N. forces continued their attack north towards the Yalu until a massive CCF assault beginning 25 November forced a general withdrawal by December 1950 to positions along the 38th parallel.

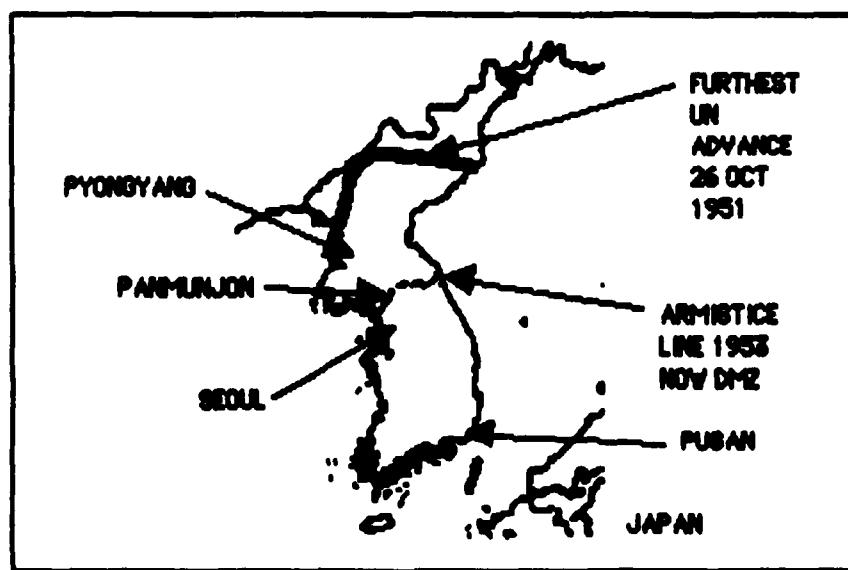
The CCF conducted another major offensive beginning New Years' Eve and pushed U.N. forces even further south. Chinese and North Koreans captured Seoul on 4 January 1951. The situation stabilized by 25 January as U.N. forces counterattacked north advancing in heavy fighting until 22 April. The CCF then committed nine armies comprising twenty-seven divisions and 250,000 men.⁶⁵ U.N. forces fell back, but this time retained Seoul. Heavy fighting continued as U.N. forces counterattacked and the CCF conducted an offensive beginning 16 May. This time, U.N. forces, for the most, part held

⁶⁵Blair, p. 822.

their ground.

The strategic mission of U.N. forces was still unclear at this time frame. The controversy over the mission and the strategy to achieve it eventually caused President Truman to recall General MacArthur. The United Nations and the United States couldn't decide if the mission was to reunite North and South Korea by force of arms or simply to restore the occupation zones north and south of the 38th parallel. In either case, military necessity alone dictated an attack north of the parallel. The Republic of Korea favored this course of action since it wanted very much to unite the Peninsula. The United States also wanted to unite the Peninsula, but was apprehensive of a land war with China in Asia. American casualty figures made the controversy all that more sensitive. Politicians and soldiers wrestled with the problem, and military strategy suffered in the absence of clear resolve one way or the other.

By 25 June 1951, a year after the start of the Korean War, NKPA-CCF and U.N. forces had fought to a standstill with opposing forces arrayed linearly across the peninsula in the vicinity of the 38th parallel.



Battle casualties at this point had risen to 1,960,354: CCF were 600,000 (dead, wounded,

captured); NKPA were 600,000 (dead, wounded, captured); ROK civilians were 469,000 (170,000 dead); U.S. were 78,800 (21,300 dead).⁶⁶ Efforts to negotiate an armistice began on 29 June 1951, but the talks were hobbled by issues of Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) location, repatriation of former enemies and POW release. The armistice was not signed until 27 July 1953 to go into effect the following day at 2000 hours.

The fighting continued while negotiations dragged on inconclusively, and battlefield casualties increased by 450,000. By July 1953 total casualties were as follows: U.N. soldiers killed, wounded or missing totalled: 996,937 of whom 850,000 were South Koreans. Communists killed, wounded or missing were 1,420,000. North and South Korean civilian casualties were 2,000,000.⁶⁷ The United States had fought in Korea nearly three times as long as in World War I and almost as long as in World War II. The fighting, at least in the first year of the war, was a fierce as any in its experience. Total American casualties were 103,284 wounded and 54,246 dead (33,629 killed in action and 20,617 military dead from other causes).⁶⁸ North and South Korea were both devastated.

CONTAINMENT 1950 - 1953

In 1950 U.S. security interests in the Pacific properly oriented on the Aleutians, Hawaii, Japan, the Ryukyus and the Philippines. Korea was not a part of this perimeter. The U.S. response to war in Korea was a knee jerk reaction by a country unprepared to execute an as yet unfunded strategy it didn't yet understand.

But the United States fought North Koreans and Chinese in Korea to stop the spread of communism. In 1950 communists were perceived as a coordinated collection of nations intent on taking over the

⁶⁶Blair, p. 930.

⁶⁷Ibid, p. 975.

⁶⁸Ibid.

world. The United States feared most that communists would start World War III in Europe to achieve this end. Indeed, during the Korean War, the United States always felt that the main effort would come in Europe. It felt that the Chinese and North Korean efforts on the Korean Peninsula were only a diversion. As a result, the war stayed limited. If the main attack was to be in Europe, then the United States could not afford an unlimited commitment in Asia.

1953 - 1978

UNITED STATES GUARANTEES ROK INDEPENDENCE

On 8 August 1953, the United States and the Republic of Korea signed a Mutual Defense Treaty which was to become effective on 17 November 1954. The Treaty's provisions were as follows: The ROK granted the U.S. the right to dispose U.S. land, air and naval forces in and around the Republic of Korea as determined by mutual agreement. The ROK agreed to keep its forces under operational control of the United Nations as long as the United Nations was responsible for the defense of Korea. The United States agreed to an extensive program of economic and military assistance for the Republic of Korea. And the United States reaffirmed its intention to employ its military power against an aggressor in the event of an unprovoked attack on the Republic of Korea. In an agreed minute to the Treaty, the Republic of Korea agreed to cooperate with the United States in its efforts to reunify the Korean Peninsula. In short, the United States took nearly full responsibility for the security and economic recovery of the Republic of Korea until reunification of the two Koreas could take place.

Allied support for this position was established when each of the 16 allied members of the United Nations Command (UNC) signed the Declaration of 16 UNC Allies which stated, "...we should again be united and prompt to resist. The consequences of such a breach would be so grave that in all probability, it would not be possible to confine hostilities within the frontiers of Korea."⁶⁹

DIPLOMACY FAILS

The Armistice in Korea was an agreement between military commanders to cease hostile acts pending a political settlement to be determined in Geneva beginning in 1953. These talks were designed to replace the Military Armistice with a lasting peace. Despite guarded optimism, the

⁶⁹Findley, p. 102.

participants failed to arrive at a consensus. The United States and its 15 allies could not agree with North Korea over the authority of the United Nations in the talks or on the role of free elections on the Korean Peninsula. Failing agreement on these basics, it was impossible for them to go on to determine what type of political solution should follow the Armistice. The talks were discontinued in June of 1954.

THE SECOND UNITED STATES WITHDRAWAL

In July of 1953, U.N. troops in Korea numbered 932,000. Of these 591,000 were ROK Army; 302,000 were from the United States; and 39,000 came from Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Turkey, Belgium, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Netherlands, Philippines, Thailand, South Africa and Luxemburg.⁷⁰

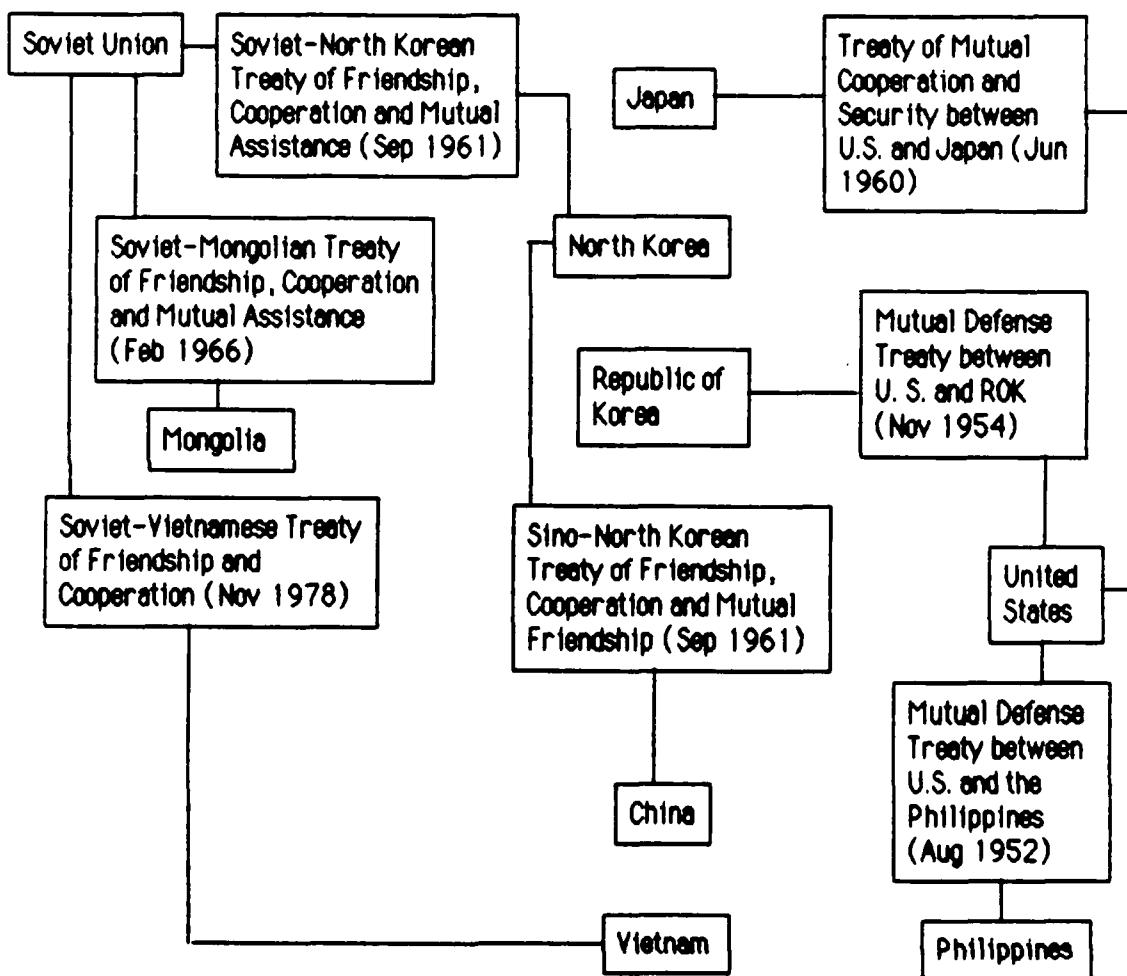
United Nations forces withdrew quickly. United States withdrawal began with President Eisenhower's announcement on 26 December 1953 that two divisions would withdraw shortly. The 45th and 40th Infantry Divisions withdrew thereafter between March and June of 1954. In August 1954, the Department of Defense announced the withdrawal of four more combat divisions. Over ROK objection this withdrawal took place between September 1954 and March 1955. All allies with the exception of small Turkish and Thai elements had departed Korea by mid 1955. Only EUSA remained. It consisted of 2 infantry divisions and support troops. The 24th Infantry Division occupied 18 and 1/2 miles of the west-central DMZ and the 7th Infantry Division, headquartered at Camp Casey in Tongdecheon, occupied positions astride the western avenues of approach from the DMZ to Seoul. Support troops were stationed throughout South Korea from Pusan in the south to the DMZ in the north. The U.S. presence of 50,000 compared to a reported 1,500,000 Chinese and three Russian infantry divisions in North Korea.⁷¹

⁷⁰Findley, p. 102.

⁷¹Ibid.

CONTAINMENT IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC AREA

The Korean War had validated the containment policy of NSC-68. It was this unanticipated and limited War which changed the minds of the administration and the American people about United States national strategy and the allocation of dollars to defense. This resulted in NATO, the rearmament of Europe and the following series of Pacific bilateral treaties.



The Soviet Union and China responded with their own series of arrangements as shown.

The Korean War had given substance to what became known as the Cold War. It initiated conventional and nuclear arms buildups and intensified hostilities between the West and communist

bloc nations, especially China. Significantly it gave root to the notion that the spread of communism in the Far East could be contained by "limited" American military power.⁷²

VIETNAM

Beginning in the late 1950s, with the experience of Korea not far behind, the United States fought an unsuccessful war in Vietnam to prevent the spread of communism. Having kept South Korea free, the United States was not going to lose South Vietnam. The United States needed troops in Vietnam and considered using one of the two remaining United States infantry divisions still in South Korea. To prevent this withdrawal, the Republic of Korea supported the United States in Vietnam with the equivalent of a Corps (45,000) from 1965 to 1973.⁷³ However, in the process of ending the Vietnam War, President Nixon articulated a new approach to collective security which became known as the Nixon Doctrine. First expressed in Guam in July of 1969 and more explicitly stated in a series of foreign policy reports to Congress beginning in February of 1970, President Nixon's State of the World Report in February of 1971 clearly stated that "America cannot and will not conceive all the plans, design all the programs, execute all the decisions and undertake all the defense of the free nations of the world. We [the United States] will help where it makes a real difference and is considered in our interest."⁷⁴

THE THIRD UNITED STATES WITHDRAWAL

Accordingly in February of 1971 after heated discussions between the United States and the ROK, both governments announced the withdrawal of an additional U.S. infantry division. On 10 March 1971, the 7th Infantry Division began its redeployment to the United States. The 2d Infantry Division

⁷²Blair, p. ix.

⁷³Findley, p. 141, 165.

⁷⁴Joo-Hong Nam, America's Commitment to South Korea. The First Decade of the Nixon Doctrine, London, Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 65.

relinquished its 18 and 1/2 miles of DMZ to the Republic of Korea Army (ROKA) and took over the 7th Infantry's positions between Seoul and the DMZ. For the first time, the ROK Army defended the entire 155 mile DMZ. The only exception was the Joint Security Area (JSA) at Panmunjom where the Military Armistice Commission (MAC) had originally negotiated the Armistice and continued to meet periodically with North Koreans. Additionally, one infantry battalion from the 2d Infantry Division guarded the access road which led into the DMZ and on to the JSA and Panmunjom. With only one U.S. division in Korea, the President did increase United States Air Forces in Korea with an additional F4 Squadron from Japan.

Also during this time frame, President Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger took advantage of Sino-Soviet enmities to establish a more traditional balance of power in the world and in the Pacific. In the Shanghai Communique of February 1972, the United States officially recognized the People's Republic of China (PRC).⁷⁵

ROK TAKES STEPS TO DEFEND ITSELF

The Republic of Korea felt abandoned. It expected the United States to do more. It, correctly, continued to feel that a militant North Korea had the ability to initiate another limited warning attack as it had in 1950. Faced with unilateral U.S. withdrawal, the Republic of Korea undertook a serious effort to be more reliant on its own forces for its defense. The genesis of this effort can actually be traced back to South Korea's participation in the Vietnam War.⁷⁶ The ROK Army's remarkable military success gave them a new sense for independent action. Additionally, their economy had grown 70% during the period 1965 to 1970, and significant fiscal resources were now more available to support an indigenous national defense effort.⁷⁷

⁷⁵Nam, p. 112.

⁷⁶Lee Suk Bok, p. 64.

⁷⁷Ibid.

The ROK also attempted a dialogue with North Korea in an attempt to seek a Korean solution to what they termed a Korean problem. These efforts began in secret and later became more open. However, there was little, if any, progress.

THE FOURTH UNITED STATES WITHDRAWAL

In 1976, President Carter was elected President. He had made a campaign promise to unilaterally continue to withdraw United States troops from Korea. On 21 December 1976, even before being sworn in, the President-elect announced plans to withdraw all United States troops from Korea over the next five years. President Carter's effort was opposed by virtually everyone except the North Koreans. South Koreans feared that the United States' withdrawal was a further abrogation of the spirit of the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty. Japan, the Philippines, as well as Australia and, to a lesser degree, New Zealand were apprehensive about the continuing validity of their bilateral security arrangements with the United States. There is even some evidence that China and the Soviet Union were not in favor of United States' troop withdrawals since neither felt confident of their ability to prevent North Korea from reigniting the conflict of 1950, this time with far more devastating consequences for all Northeast Asia.⁷⁸ Universal concerns for regional stability based on United States military presence became an increasingly strong and vocal argument.

⁷⁸Jeffrey B. Gaynor, "Withdrawal of U.S. Ground Forces from South Korea," Backgrounder, Washington, D.C., The Heritage Foundation, 15 June 1977, p. 13.

1978 - 1990

UNITED STATES SLOWS WITHDRAWAL

The United States withdrawals slowed beginning in 1978 when President Carter reversed himself. He agreed to withdraw only 6,000 soldiers by the end of 1979. Three thousand four hundred would leave in 1978 and 2,000 in 1979. In December of 1978 one infantry battalion from the 2d Infantry Division and additional support units completed the 3,400 withdrawal.⁷⁹ In January 1979, updated intelligence indicated that North Korea had a 2 to 1 advantage over United States and ROK forces on the Korean Peninsula.⁸⁰ In July 1979 President Carter, who had already withdrawn 3,760 soldiers since 1977, suspended further United States troop withdrawals pending a review in 1981 by the new administration.⁸¹ In 1981 President Reagan firmly stated that there would be no further withdrawals.

INCIDENTS

The seemingly irresistible propensity for the United States to withdraw its forces from Korea despite an obvious and continuing North Korean threat is particularly noteworthy. North Korea built up a numerically superior Army after World War II in preparation for what became the Korean War. In 1950 ROK ground forces numbered 64,000; North Korea's numbered 136,000.⁸² The United States knew this, but continued to withdraw anyway. The Korean War may have in part resulted from this withdrawal and other indications that the United States was not committed to South Korea. After the Korean War, North Korea rebuilt its Army and continued to dispose them in an offensive rather

⁷⁹Findley, p. 207-208

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 209.

⁸²Ibid., p.56.

than defensive posture. And in the years since 1953, North Korea has initiated literally hundreds if not thousands of DMZ and other incidents in a continuing demonstration of recalcitrance and continuing hostility towards the Republic of Korea and the United States. Combat casualties since the Armistice (1953-1982) number: U.S. soldiers and airmen-58 killed, 133 wounded; ROK service members-376 killed, 640 wounded; ROK civilians-149 killed, 146 wounded; and North Korean service members and terrorists-786 killed, 14 wounded.⁸³ These numbers do not count the North Korean seizure of the *USS Pueblo* in January of 1968 or the April 1969 downing of a United States EC-121 reconnaissance aircraft with the loss of all 31 crew members.⁸⁴ In 1968 North Korea attempted to penetrate the South Korean presidential mansion and assassinate the residents.⁸⁵ On 18 August 1976, North Koreans in the JSA at Panmunjon deliberately singled out two American officers and brutally murdered them with axes.⁸⁶ On 26 August 1981, North Koreans fired an SA-2 antiaircraft missile at a United States SR-71 reconnaissance aircraft in international airspace.⁸⁷ In October of 1983, North Korean terrorists blew up a Korean Air Liner in Rangoon, carrying 17 of then President Chun's entourage, and in November of 1987, North Korean agents successfully blew up another KAL aircraft in mid-air near Burma.⁸⁸ And as late as February 1990, North Korea may have dug as many as 18 tunnels under the DMZ to accommodate infiltration.⁸⁹ The United States has responded to each of these incidents with protest, rhetoric and often with temporary air and naval reinforcements.

⁸³Findley, p. 220.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 151.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 118.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 195.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 230.

⁸⁸Harold C. Hinton, Donald Zagoria, Jung Ho Lee, et al., The U.S.-Korean Security Relationship: Prospects and Challenges for the 1990s, Cambridge, MA., The Sejong Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., 1988, p. viii.

⁸⁹UPI, Compuserve Newsnetwrok, 23 Mar 90.

to Korea. Yet the United States has continued over the long term to follow a consistent pattern of ground force withdrawal.

In 1990 the United States will reduce its presence in the region again. Troop strength in Korea will decrease from 43,000 to 38,000 in FY90 as a result of Department of Defense cuts in Asia. America has approximately 120,000 service members in Japan, the Philippines, and Korea. Japan and Korea will each lose 5,000 ; the Philippines 2,000 this year. The cuts in Korea will leave the 2d Infantry Division with 2 infantry battalions, 2 tank battalions, and 2 mechanized infantry battalions which is three ground maneuver battalions short for a normal infantry division. The 2d Infantry Division does, however, have a powerful aviation brigade and a reinforced division artillery bringing the total troop strength to about 16,000. The remainder of the 38,000 in Korea will be in headquarters, combat support and combat service support units which are designed to support forces already in Korea as well as to accommodate the rapid reinforcement of Korea if the North should attack again. Annually since 1976, Exercise Team Spirit practices this reinforcement with the participation of over 100,000 U.S. and ROK soldiers making it the largest such exercise in the free world, larger than the Reinforcement of Germany (REFORGER).

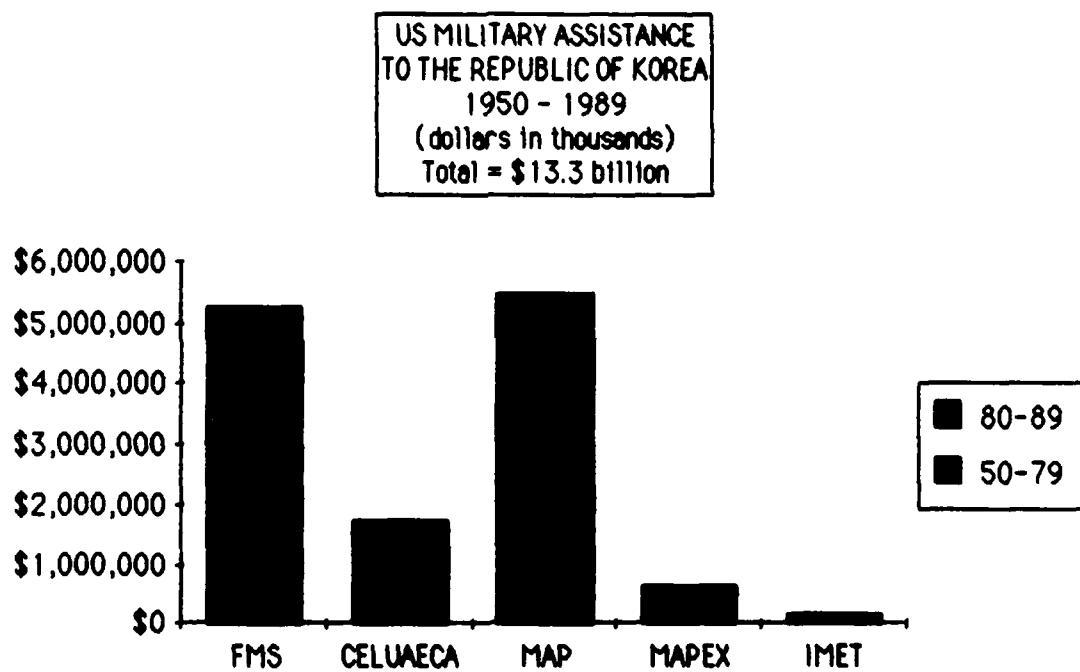
THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA TODAY

MILITARY

Apprehensive of the potential for the United States to one day withdraw all its troops, the Republic of Korea undertook a number of specific measures to improve its armed forces.

UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE

First they solicited and received significantly increased military assistance from the United States totalling \$13.3 billion over the period 1950 to 1989.



90

FMS = Foreign Military Sales
CELUAECA = Commercial Exports Licensed Under Arms Export Control Act
MAP = Military Assistance Program
MAPEX = Military Assistance Program Excess Defense Articles
IMET = International Military Education and Training

⁹⁰ Foreign Military Sales, Foreign Military Construction Sales and Military Assistance Facts as of September 30, 1989, Washington D.C., Department of Defense, p. 2-15.

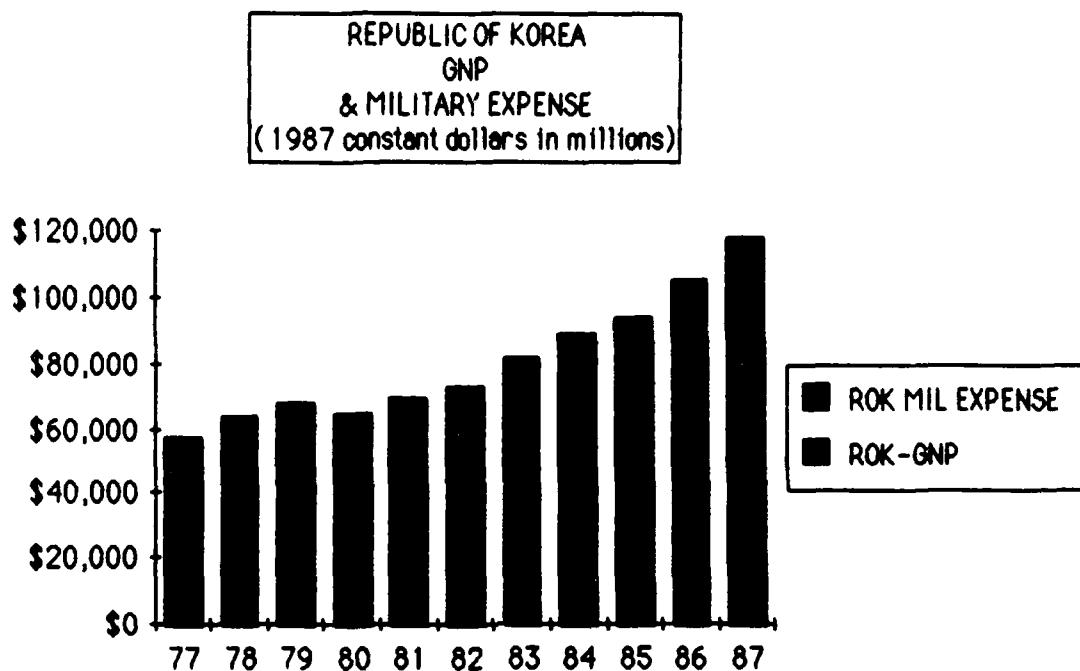
ROK DOMESTIC DEFENSE INDUSTRY

Secondly, they developed a domestic defense industry through a series of five year Force Development Plans (FDPs). The first FDP covered 1976 - 1980, but was extended one year because of financial constraints. FDP II covered 1982 - 1986, and FDP III covers 1987 - 1992. In these plans, South Korea sought to domestically produce all unsophisticated equipment used by its own armed forces. For instance, it now produces its own M16 rifles. Expanding on this concept, the Republic of South Korea sought co-production agreements to manufacture more complex equipment in South Korea. As an example, Korea now makes its own F5 fighter aircraft, and is a subcontractor with General Dynamics for the fuselage sections of the F16 C/D fighter aircraft it purchases for the ROK Air Force. South Korea also upgrades its own U.S. manufactured M48A5 Tanks and has designed and produced 535 of its own tanks, the Type 88 MBT (Main Battle Tank). Additionally, South Koreans co-produce AH-1 attack and UH-1 utility helicopters in conjunction with Bell-Textron and the 500MD helicopter with Hughes Aircraft.⁹¹ In so doing, South Koreans have been able not only to reduce their balance of payments but to successfully develop a comprehensive, sophisticated, and healthy defense industry.

⁹¹Defense and Foreign Affairs Handbook 1989, Alexandria, Virginia, International Media Corporation, p. 593-594.

ECONOMIC SUCCESS

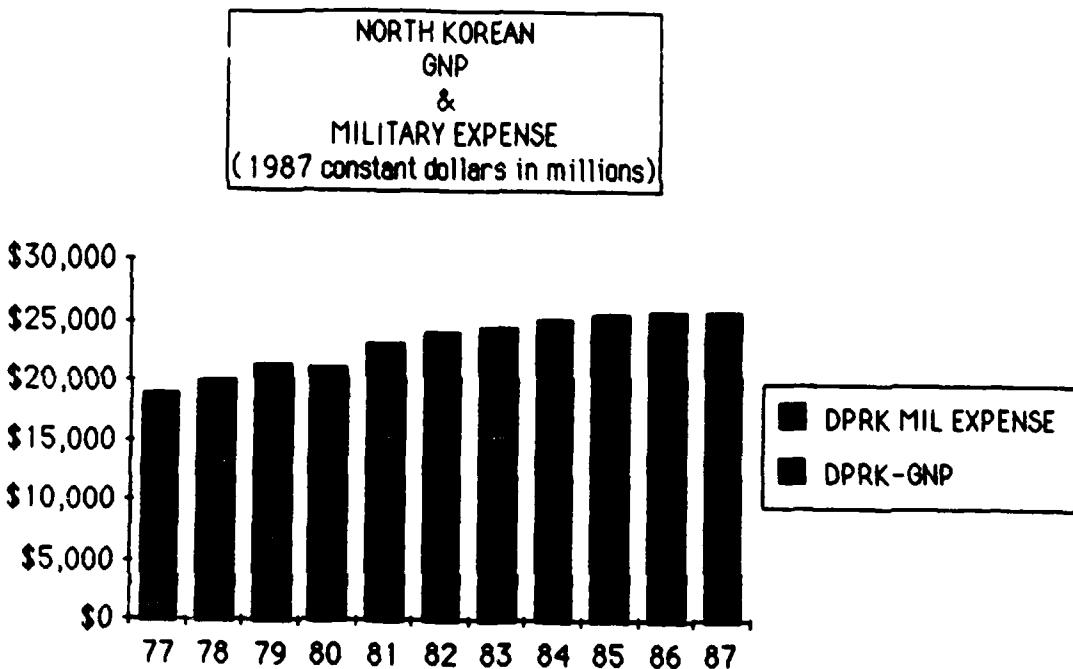
The defense industry is only a part of the larger overall success of the ROK economy. This chart shows the phenomenal growth of the ROK Gross National Product (GNP) since 1977



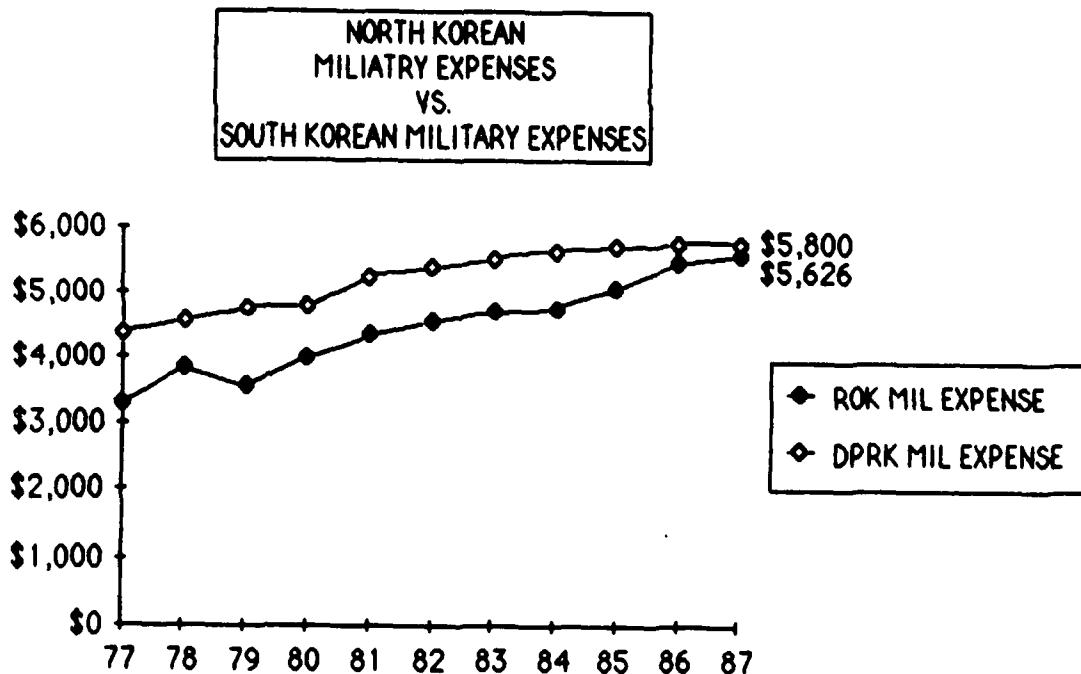
92

92 World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1988, United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, TABLE I, P. 91.

This becomes extremely significant when compared to the North Korean economy.



Significantly, while North Korea spends a proportionally large percentage of its GNP on defense (20% vs 5%), it is a larger piece of an increasingly smaller pie. As a result, in 1988 South Korean military expenditures roughly equalled those of the North's.



ROK VS DPRK MILITARY

The following charts compare North and South Korean Armed Forces.

ROK Total Armed Forces: 598,000

Paramilitary Forces: There is a Civilian Defense Corps of approximately 3,500,000, a Student Homeland Defense Corps of 600,000, and a Hydrographic Service.

Available manpower: 12,403,000;

8,021,000 fit for military service.

Service period: 30-36 months for all Services.

Annual Military Expenditure: Budget of \$7.25 billion, 32.8 % of central government budget (FY 88).

DPRK Total Armed Forces: 838,000

Paramilitary Forces: 38,000 security forces and border guards. There is also a civilian militia of about 1.5 million. Some sources list DPRK reserve forces as numbering some five-million.

Available manpower: 5,497,000;

3,361,000 fit for military service.

Service period: Five years for Army and Navy; approximately three years for the Air Force.

Annual Military Expenditure: Budget of \$4.2 billion budget (1985) billion.

Deployment: Madagascar (100), Nicaragua, Iran (300), Angola and other African countries (1,000), Seychelles (40), Uganda (200).

In a world context the mere size of the North and South Korean armed forces is alarming since both are within the top ten in the world.

1. USSR	6. Iraq
2. China	7. North Korea
3. USA	8. Iran
4. India	9. TURKEY
5. Vietnam	10. South Korea ⁹³

The comparison of specific branches of the North and South Korean Armed Forces on the next several pages comes from the Defense and Foreign Affairs Handbook 1989 published this year by the International Media Corporation in Alexandria, Virginia.

⁹³World Military and Social Expenditures 1989, Washington, D.C., World Priorities, p. 52.

ROK ARMY

Manpower: 520,000.

Reserves: About 1.4 million Regular, 3.3 million Homeland Reserve Defense Force.

Service period: 30-36 months.

Organization: 3 Army Groups (1 Reserve) with 5 Corps HQ incorporating:

2 mechanized divisions

19 infantry divisions

7 Special Warfare brigades

5 airborne brigades

1 Army aviation brigade

2 independent infantry brigades

2 armored brigades

2 air defense brigades

7 tank battalions

30 artillery battalions

2 SAM battalions

2 SAM brigades

Equipment:

Tanks: 300 M-47, 850 m-48, 60 M-60, 525 Type 88.

APCs: 500 M-113s and M577s, OTO-Melara 4x4 Amphibian, 250 Fiat 6614, 61 LVTP-7s, 45 M-8s.

Artillery: 3,000 105mm, 155mm 175mm, 203mm field guns and howitzers; 113 M-109A2 155mm SP

MRL: 130mm

Mortars: 5,300 82mm, 107mm

Anti-tank:

RCL: 57mm, 75mm and 106mm

Guns: 8 M-18 SP, 50 M-36 90mm SP

ATWG: TOW

RL: LAW

Anti-aircraft:

Guns: 35mm, 80 40mm, 60 Vulcan 20mm SP

SSM: Honest John

SAM: 110 Hawk, 100 Nike Hercules

Aviation: Helicopters: 90-100

McDonnell-Douglas 500D Defender, 40

UH-1H, 6 AH-1J, 21 AH-1S, 5 KH-4;

Aircraft: 10 O-2A, 10 DHC-2, 10 O-1A.

NB: TOW, 28 Improved Hawk kits are on

order. South Korea is reportedly producing

light armored vehicles. Additional 55 McD

500MG Defenders being assembled in

1987-88, and further 50 UH-1Hs being

supplied during 1987.

DPRK ARMY

Manpower: 750,000.

Reserves: 500,000

Service period: 5 years.

Organization: 3 mechanized, 8 all-arms headquarters

2 tank divisions

24 infantry divisions

5 motorized infantry divisions

9 independent infantry brigades

7 independent armored brigades

22 special operations brigades, including 3 commando, 4 reconnaissance, 1 river crossing, 5 airborne and 3 amphibious.

Equipment:

Tanks: 300 T-34, 2,800 T-54/-55/-62 and 175 Type-59 med., 100 PT-76, 50 Type 62 light..

Armored fighting vehicles:

Armored Cars: 140 BA-64; MICV: BMP-1; APCs: 1,100 BTR-40/-50/-60/-152, Type-531.

Artillery: 4,700 field guns and howitzers up to 152mm; Mortars: 11,000 82mm, 120mm, 240mm; MRL: 1,900 including Type-63 107mm, BM-21 122mm, 130mm RPU-14, BM-14-16 140mm, BM-20 200mm, BM-24 240mm.

Anti-tank:

Guns: 45mm, 57mm, 75mm, 85mm, 800 SU-76 and SU-100; RCL: 1,500 B-10 82mm, 1,000 B-11 107mm; ATWG: Sagger, Snapper.

SSM: 54 Frog Mk5 and 7.

Air defense: Guns: 8,000 23mm, 37mm, 57mm, 85mm, and 100mm; ZSU-23-4 and ZSU-57-2 SP guns.

SAM: SA-7

More specifically the respective Air Forces stack up like this:

SOUTH KOREAN AIR FORCE

Manpower: 33,000, including 600 pilots.

Reserves: 55,000.

Service period: 36 months.

Organization:

18 fighter/ground attack squadrons with 70 F-4D/F-4E Phantom II, 30 F-5A, 20 F-5B, 140 F-5E, 30 F-16C/D.

1 COIN squadron with 20 A-37B

1 reconnaissance squadron with 12 RF-SA

3 transport squadrons with 3 C-130H-30

Hercules, 10 C-123K, 3 Commander, 2

HS-74B and 1 Bell UH-1N (in VIP configuration)

1 search and rescue helicopter squadron with 20 Bell UH-1B/N, 6 UH-1H.

Light aircraft include: 15 Cessna O-2, 6

Cessna U-17, 3 DH Beaver (Liaison).

Trainers include: 20 T-41D, 24 T-28D, 30

T-33A; some F-5B continue in service with 35 F-5F (latter in squadron OCU), 30 T-37C.

AAM: AIM-9L Super Sidewinder

ASM: Maverick

NB: 24 ex-USAF F-4Es being supplied in 1988, with 30 more programmed. Further F-16s also programmed together with additional C-130Hs.

Major air bases: Chinnae, Chonctsu, Osan, Saechon, Suwon.

35 auxiliaries.

NORTH KOREAN AIR FORCE

Manpower: 55,000 regular, including 800 pilots.

Reserves: 40,000.

Service period: Up to four years.

Organization:

3 light bomber squadrons with 60 n-28

10 fighter/ground attack squadrons with 120 MiG-17, 100 MiG-19, 60 A-5.

12 interceptor squadrons with 160 MiG-21 and 60 MiG-23.

Transports include 200 An-2, 5 n-14, 4 n-18, 2 Tu-154B, 20 An-24, 1 n-62.

Helicopters include 60 Mi-8, 50 Mi-24, 80 Hughes 300/500.

Training Aircraft include 120 BT-5, BT-6, 70 MiG-15UTI and MiG-21U, JJ-5, JJ-6, 30 Chinese CJ-6.

AAM: AA-2 Atoll

4 SAM brigades with 800 SA-2 and some SA-3

Major air bases: Pyong-ni, Pyongyang East, Taechon, Seamcham, Sinuiju, Sunan, Viji, Wonsan.

NB: 50 MiG-23 aircraft were supplied to North Korea by the Soviet Union in 1985 and are being integrated into the Air Force. Mi-24 helicopter gunships have also been supplied through Soviet military aid. The 80 Hughes helicopters were illegally exported to the DPRK via a West German exporter. The Government of the ROK is especially concerned about them because they could masquerade as ROK forces helicopters at the DMZ, as ROK forces also use Hughes helicopters.

And a comparison of naval forces is shown on the next page.

ROK NAVY

Manpower: 29,000, plus 25,000 in Marine Corps
Reserves: 7,000, plus 60,000 for Marines.
Service period: 36 months (60% of total force)

Fleet:

Submarines:
3 Korean built (2 more in the works)

Destroyers:
7 ex-US Gearing FRAM I/II-class
2 ex-US Allen M. Sumner-class
2 ex-US Fletcher-class

Frigates:
6 Ulsan-class (HDF 2100) (1 building)
12 HDP-1000-class (Ma-San Ho-class)

Light Forces:
8 PSM-5 class missile FAC(G)
1 ex-US Asheville-class missile FAC(G) with Standard
2 Wildcat FAC(G) with Exocet MM-38

Patrol Vessels:
4 Sea Shark-class
32 Sea Dolphin-class
30 Sea Hawk-class
2 PK type
2 coastal patrol craft

Mine warfare forces:
1 SK 5000 (Iericl) class minehunter (2 more building)
8 ex-US MSC type minesweepers

Landing Ships:
8 ex-US LST
7 ex-US LSM Type 1-class
1 ex-US LCU Type 501-class
6 LCU 1610-class
LCVP type

Miscellaneous: 7 survey/oceanographic vessels (under Ministry of Transport command), 6 tankers, 2 salvage ships, 2 tugs, 35 auxiliaries.

Coast Guard:
1 patrol ship of 1,200 tons, 3 Sea Whale of 650 tons, 4 Sea Shark of 280 tons, 200+ patrol and rescue craft.

Marines: (25,000 personnel)
2 divisions, 1 brigade. Equipment: Tanks: 40 M-47; AFV: APC: LVTP-7; Artillery: Howitzer: 105mm; Aviation: 12 Alouette III, 10 utility aircraft.

DPRK NAVY

Manpower: 33,000 officers and men.
Reserves: 40,000
Service period: 5 years

Fleet:

Submarines:
4 ex-Chinese Romeo-class patrol type
13 Romeo-class (Korean built)
4 ex-USSR Whiskey-class patrol type
5-plus miniature submarines

Frigates:
2 Najin-class.

Corvettes:
4 Sariwan-class

Light Forces:
8 ex-USSR Osa I-class FAC (with Styx missile)
18 Soju-class FAC(G) (4 building)
8 ex-USSR Komar-class FAC(G) (with Styx)
14 ex-Chinese FAC(G)
8 ex-Chinese Shantou-class FAC(T)
8 Shohung-class FAC
7 Taechong-class large patrol craft
6 ex-Chinese Hainan-class large patrol craft
15 ex-Soviet SO-1 class large patrol craft
4 Chodo-class FAC
66 Chado-class FAC
45 Chong-Jin-class FAC
4 K-48 class FAC
3 ex-USSR Shershen-class FAC(T)
60 P6 class FAC(T)
4 Sinpo-class FAC
15 Iwon-class FAC(T)
6 AN Ju-class FAC(T)
72 Ku Song- and Sin Hung-class FAC(T)
10 Soviet KM-4 coastal patrol craft
20 light gunboats for inshore patrols

Other vessels: 10 LSM
25 Hanchon-type LCU
100 Nampo-class assault craft
45 minesweepers
100+ trawlers, etc.
12 ex-Soviet ocean tugs
35 auxiliaries.

Naval Bases: Wonsan, Cha-ho, Kim-cheak, Sogon-ri, May-ang-do, najin, sanjiling-dong, Yohori, Songjon, Pando, Munchon-up, Namiae-ri, Kosong-up, Nampo, Piga-gat, Yoganpo-ri, Tasa-ri, Sohse-ri, Chodo, Sunwi-do, Pupo-ri.

CONCLUSIONS

Korea has a significant history of violent conflict.

This history of conflict occurred originally because China and her adversaries in the northeast, what is now Mongolia, Manchuria, and Russia, all felt it necessary to secure their southern flank while fighting one another.

In the 1500s the Korean Peninsula became the battleground of convenience between the land powers of Asia and Japan.

After World War II, the United States and the Republic of Korea in the South took up where the Japanese had left off in facing China, the Soviet Union and the Peoples Democratic Republic in the North.

The United States has always sought to disengage itself from the Korean Peninsula.

After World War II, after the Korean War, and despite any number of significant incidents and a continuing threat, the United States has continued to reduce its troop presence in the Republic of Korea.

War on the Korean Peninsula is a distinct possibility.

Both North and South Korea are armed to the teeth. North Korea maintains a numerical advantage in offensive weapons (tanks, artillery, special purpose forces) and continues to put them in an offensive posture pointed south where they could attack with little or no warning. North and South Korea could fight one another in a war over issues that range from reunification to retaliation over a major or minor incident. Anyone looking for an excuse would have no trouble finding one.

United State troops stationed in the Republic of Korea deter conflict on the Peninsula.

There hasn't been a war on the Korean Peninsula since United States troops stayed in South Korea in 1953. This is no small accomplishment when viewed in light of the number and seriousness of the incidents which have occurred.

United States troops make the military balance unacceptable for a North Korean attack. U. S. nuclear weapons help to do this.

The Soviet Union and China cannot afford the financial, military and political difficulties that another Korean War would start.

Japan and other Asia-Pacific nations who have treaty arrangements with the United States would not understand if the United States "abandoned" South Korea by removing its troops leaving the ROK vulnerable to North Korean attack.

The United States should continue to station troops in Korea.

This follows as a natural conclusion to those above. The United States troop presence is the only effective method of providing for stability on the Korean Peninsula which is in turn the key to regional stability in Northeast Asia. When so derived, it is clear that U.S. troops in Korea are clearly in the national interest.

RECOMMENDATIONS

MILITARY

Continue United States troop presence.

The United States should continue to station at least one corps headquarters, one infantry division, needed combat support and combat service support, and a USAF wing in the Republic of Korea. Total troop strength should be no less than 30,000 and no more than 50,000. This meets the requirement of the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty and deters North Korea from aggression. It provides a trip wire as well as a self-contained combat formation that can fight in case of war. It also provides the needed assets to facilitate the rapid reinforcement of Korea by additional United States or Allied troops. This level of commitment is necessary as the glue which makes the system of bilateral security arrangements in the Pacific as viable as NATO has been in Europe. It runs directly counter to the historical trend of U.S. involvement in the Republic of Korea.

Over time, the United States must transition its Korean based forces to a regional contingency orientation.

The principal threat for the time being is North Korea. Over the long run, military forces may be required regionally outside Korea. Our security arrangements with the Republic of Korea must become flexible enough to accommodate deployment and employment of U.S. Korea based troops outside Korea. The ROK is the only place in Asia outside Okinawa where the United States has ground combat troops stationed. In a time of smaller defense budgets and force structure reductions, the United States must have this added degree of flexibility.

The United States must clean up its chain of command arrangements.

This recommendation has two aspects. One is Korean; the other American.

Combined Forces Command (CFC) In accordance with the 1954 Treaty and subsequent agreements, an American four-star general commands all forces in Korea, both U.S. and ROK. This may make sense in war, but it is a sticking point with Korean pride and nationalism. While a U.S. general has had this responsibility since 1950, the current arrangement, CFC, was created in 1978 to accommodate President Carter's plan for total withdrawal and transfer of all responsibility to Koreans. The United States wisely stopped in the middle of that process, but failed to follow with an updated command structure. Needed revisions should retain some form of United Nations authority and oversight, but remove the worrisome appearances that the United States is running the Korean Defense establishment.

Make United States Forces in Korea a sub-unified theater command of Pacific Command.

The United States needs to clean up its own chain of command relationships. Pacific Command (PACOM) is clearly responsible for the Asia-Pacific region. Korean based forces should be a sub-unified theater command of PACOM. Protestations to the contrary are too complicated, convoluted, tainted with service parochialism and do not warrant discussion here.

Move the United States headquarters out of Yongsan.

The American Headquarters and senior officer housing area is at Yongsan Garrison in downtown Seoul. The land by itself is worth a fortune and 12 million Koreans live and are constantly reminded of U.S. presence and influence. Inasmuch as the South Korean government has offered \$3 billion⁹⁴ to relocate the headquarters, it seems a prudent and economic thing to do.

⁹⁴UPI, Compuserve Newsnet, 17 Feb 1990.

Win the next Korean War if required to fight.

The war fighting strategy for another Korean War should be clearly determined ahead of time. No one in the United States or in the Republic of Korea could support another war fought for the status quo ante bellum. The costs of any war on the Korean Peninsula would be staggering. In 1950 to 1953 the cost in human life alone was almost 4 and 1/2 million. A war in the 90s would be far more devastating given the intensity of modern combat and the size of the North and South Korean standing armies alone. If North Korea attacks the South, the United Nations, the United States, the Republic of Korea and their allies should accept no settlement short of a redrawn North Korean southern boundary stretching across the narrow neck of the Korean Peninsula from Chongu to Hungnam. This was probably an achievable objective in 1951, but no one was smart enough to have pursued it.⁹⁵ This would have left North Korea as a rump country with Pyongyang and a majority of its population as a part of South Korea. It would maintain a buffer for a nervous China, and it would garner valuable breathing space for a now vulnerable Seoul which is only 35 miles from the DMZ. If war breaks out again, destruction should be focused on North Korean territory and her national identity should be reduced to that of a truncated appendage. Americans and South Koreans would justifiably be unwilling to support a lesser objective. Given the costs of such a war, it would be better to not fight than to fight for no meaningful objective and lose so much in the process.

Continue the current policy on nuclear weapons in Korea.

The United States should continue to neither confirm or deny the presence of U. S. nuclear weapons in the Republic of Korea. The United States is a nuclear power and that capability is a powerful deterrent to North Korea. While it may be difficult to envision the use of nuclear weapons in Korea, it is not unthinkable, and it is not worth setting a precedent on this sensitive issue in the region. Over

⁹⁵ Suggested by Clay Blair in Forgotten War.

time, however, this policy may have such an increased political cost that it should be reviewed and possibly changed.

ECONOMICS

Stop the Korea bashing.

The United States needs to recognize the vibrant and rapidly growing ROK economy for what it is and stop inane discussions of unbalanced U.S.-Korean trade accounts and the need for trade barriers. Koreans underestimate their own economic success and feel that American complaint over a \$9 billion U.S.-Korean trade deficit is unfair. Americans, conversely, overestimate the success of the ROK economy and see it as a threat. Ultimately, the U.S. trade deficit is a problem of its own economy which the U.S. must solve for itself. Continued mutual U.S.-Korea bashing does no one any good. The United States must work with South Korea as trading partners in an increasingly complicated world market system.

POLITICS

Stop trying to run Korean politics.

The United States must recognize that the government of South Korea has primacy in running its own affairs. We took a strong hand in economic, political, and military leadership after the Korean War and have continued to do so for longer than it is wise. We need to stop trying to be in charge in South Korea. If we fail to do so, South Koreans will become increasingly resentful of our presence, and we will lose an important ability to influence.

The Korean track record on liberal democracy is not what the United States would like it to be, but they are making progress. The United States should not try to manipulate what is going on inside Korea. Trying to influence it is all right, but trying to control it is another thing, especially in the

minds of South Koreans. Avoid any appearance of United States Central Intelligence involvement in South Korean politics. The Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) has an atrocious record of interference in the Korean political process and has repressed the democratic process and political dissent. President Roh Tae Woo, the current South Korean President, has gone to great lengths to correct these abuses and to distance his office from the appearance of improper U.S. influence. The State Department officers who serve as Ambassador to the Republic of Korea must be beyond reproach.

Put a Korean in charge of United Nations Military Armistice Commission (UNC MAC) talks.

This function is currently performed by a United States Admiral who sits at the Military Armistice Commission meetings held periodically at the Joint Security Area (JSA) in Panmunjon. This is correct in principle, but there is something incongruous in having an American represent Korea in what is essentially a Korean problem. The United Nations aspect of the MAC should be preserved, but a new arrangement should be worked out whereby a South Korean is talking to a North Korean.

Negotiate a political settlement and end the armistice.

The armistice has lasted for 37 years. It should be replaced by a treaty or other settlement that acknowledges the reality of the situation and defuses the potentially explosive military confrontation which currently exists. It would formalize relations so that Koreans could begin the dialogue among one another that has been their heritage and is their future.

Support nordpolitic and peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula.

South Korea's policy of nordpolitics which seeks to establish relations with those countries traditionally aligned with North Korea has been successful. This trend can only help to bring pressure on North Korea to become a participating member of the world rather than the Hermit Kingdom she now is.⁹⁶

The long term goal should be eventual unification of the Korean Peninsula under some form of government determined by a peaceful, democratic referendum process. There is little chance of this in the near future, but nordpolitics will help to talk about the future instead of institutionalizing the past.

⁹⁶John Curtis Perry and David Zweig, "A Visit to the Hermit Kingdom," Christian Science World Monitor, April 1990, p. 59-64.

Korean Peninsula

